

# **TOWN OF ARLINGTON**

**Recreation Department**  
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation



## **Recreation Department**

### **PARK COMMISSIONERS**

Shirley Canniff  
Leslie Mayer  
Jen Rothenberg  
Phil Lasker  
Scott Walker  
Josh Fenollosa - Associate  
Sarah Carrier- Associate

## **MEETING NOTICE**

The Park and Recreation Commission

Tuesday, April 9, 2024

7:00 PM – Arlington Community Center Large Meeting Room

## **AGENDA**

- 1) Private Preschool/Organization Permitting Discussion
- 2) Arlington/Belmont Crew Agreement Review
- 3) Special Events Requests:
  - a) Friends of Robbins Farm Park – 5/11, 7/4, 7/25, 8/3, 8/24, 9/7, 11/2
  - b) APS – Robbins Farm Park – 6/15
- 4) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:
  - a) Capital Plan Review
  - b) Parallel Final Design Review – 4/23/2024
- 5) Correspondence Received: Hills Hill (Various), Preschool (MAAEYC)
- 6) New Business
  - a) Artificial Turf Committee Update –Joe Connelly and Leslie Mayer
  - b) Open Space Committee Update – Shirley Canniff
- 7) Public Comment

## Arlington Park and Recreation Commission Next Steps

Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Tue 4/2/2024 9:29 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Jen Rothenberg <jenjenroth@gmail.com>; bcanniff@comcast.net <bcanniff@comcast.net>

Bcc: afterschool@abgclub.org <afterschool@abgclub.org>; airc819@gmail.com <airc819@gmail.com>; alouette4edu@gmail.com <alouette4edu@gmail.com>; anju\_rijal@hotmail.com <anju\_rijal@hotmail.com>; aptgstratton@verizon.net <aptgstratton@verizon.net>; artpu88@gmail.com <artpu88@gmail.com>; brightstartadm@gmail.com <brightstartadm@gmail.com>; Carole Gonzales <carolegreatex@yahoo.com>; cristinablancas@hotmail.com <cristinablancas@hotmail.com>; csullivan7@gmail.com <csullivan7@gmail.com>; director@rogerspierce.org <director@rogerspierce.org>; elizabethnoguera@icloud.com <elizabethnoguera@icloud.com>; elizabethsdaycare.ma@gmail.com <elizabethsdaycare.ma@gmail.com>; Ellen Contini <e.contini34@gmail.com>; Ellie Murphy <emurphy@town.arlington.ma.us>; hrobillard@comcast.net <hrobillard@comcast.net>; info@arlingtonchildrenshouse.org <info@arlingtonchildrenshouse.org>; Jenn Eisenheim <snsdirector.je@gmail.com>; Kim Grubb <kgrubb@town.arlington.ma.us>; kmcgill@springboardschools.com <kmcgill@springboardschools.com>

 1 attachments (58 KB)

3-29-Memo to Park Commission with Recommendations.pdf;

Hi Everyone,

Attached is a memo from the Park Commission member working group to the full Park Commission regarding our recommendations as a result of the survey data, discussions with program directors, and with various groups of parents.

I will be reviewing the survey results and these recommendations at the April 9<sup>th</sup> Park Commission meeting. This meeting is being held at the Arlington Community Center, 27 Maple Street starting at 7 pm. Below is a summary of our recommendations:

1. The Director of Recreation works with the individual programs whose scheduling times overlap to come up with an agreed upon schedule.
2. The official permitting process for playground usage begins on September 1, 2024.
3. There will be no fees for playground permits at this time.
4. This permitting process will be reviewed by the Park Commission after the first year of implementation.
5. Organizations wishing to make a donation for playground upkeep and repairs may do so and those funds are to be deposited into the Park Beautification Fund and will be reserved for playground repairs.

If anyone has any questions about these proposed recommendations please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Thank you,

Joseph Connelly, M.Ed.  
Director of Recreation  
Town of Arlington  
781-316-3889  
jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us

**Public Records Notice**

1



**PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**422 Summer Street, Arlington, Massachusetts 02474**

**M E M O**

To: Park and Recreation Commission  
From: Joseph Connelly, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Jen Rothenberg, Park Commission  
Shirley Canniff, Park Commission  
Date: 3/29/2024  
Subject: Private Preschool/Organization Playground Use

Members of the Park Commission and I had the opportunity to meet with several of the Preschool/Organization Directors on Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. A more detailed survey was issued after that meeting to collect playground use data. The survey was sent to forty-five Arlington Private Preschools/Organizations that are licensed with the Department of Early Education and Care. After multiple requests for organizations to complete the survey we ended up with a 64% return rate.

Data Summary	# of Organizations	Licensed # of Students	License Town Outdoor Space with EEC	Do Not License Town Outdoor Space with EEC
Schools/Organizations Using Town Facilities on a regular basis	16	1,166 total students	7	9
Schools/Organizations Not Using Town Facilities on a regular basis	13	x	x	13
No Responses	16	x	x	x

Eleven town playgrounds were identified as being used by the sixteen organizations that use town playgrounds on a regular basis throughout the year. Of the eleven playgrounds identified there were no scheduling conflicts at eight of the playgrounds. Three of the playgrounds had overlapping use.

Parks & Playgrounds Used	# of Org.	# Time Conflicts
Bishop	1	0
Stratton	1	0
Florence	1	0
McClennen	1	0
Peirce	1	0
Wellington	1	0
North Union	1	0
Robbins	1	0
Parmenter	3	6
Buzzell	4	7
Spy	4	2

Based on the survey results received to date, as well as the conversations with the various program directors, we are making the following recommendations for consideration of the Park Commission.

1. The Director of Recreation works with the individual programs whose scheduling times overlap to come up with an agreed upon schedule.
2. The official permitting process for playground usage begins on September 1, 2024.
3. There will be no fees for playground permits at this time.
4. This permitting process will be reviewed by the Park Commission after the first year of implementation.
5. Organizations wishing to make a donation for playground upkeep and repairs may do so and those funds are to be deposited into the Park Beautification Fund and will be reserved for playground repairs.

Town of Arlington

Arlington /Belmont Crew, Inc.

Agreement Terms for Use of Property for

Equipment Storage and Pond Access located at Pond Lane Lot

1. Provide a clear map with the dimensions of the fenced area. A survey provided to the Town on December 1, 2021.
2. All Arlington Belmont equipment, boats, trailers, etc. must be stored within the fenced area and not on other portions of the Park and Recreation property, (other than the regatta tent trailer, boat trailers and AB Crew storage sheds). Anything stored outside the fenced area must have the location approved by the Recreation Department.
3. The storage of all flammable liquids must be stored in a location/site approved by the Arlington Fire Department. Pending approval by the Arlington Fire Department, the flammable liquids storage cabinet will be located within the cage.
4. Arlington Belmont Crew agrees to keep the area within the fenced storage area and the dirt parking area adjacent to the storage area reasonably clean and free of debris throughout their permitted seasons (fall and spring). This shall also include at a minimum a pre-season and post-season clean-up.
5. Recreation must have key access to fenced area and shed(s).
6. All staff involved with the program to be CORI checked every two years by Arlington Belmont Crew and an annual letter must be provided to Arlington Recreation stating this has been completed.
7. Liability Insurance must be submitted prior to each rowing season.
8. All participants must be members of US Rowing, which provides Arlington Belmont Crew access to liability insurance.
9. The season length to be submitted each year upon request of Arlington Recreation, including non-water practices, on the pond days/time and proposed season end date for spring and fall.
10. Full adherence to terms of existing Storage Shed policy, Amplification policy and all Town by-laws (especially related to motorboat usage on Spy Pond).
- ✱ 11. The use of electric or battery powered amplification is prohibited with the exception of the Coxswain Boxes. Manual bullhorns are allowed.
12. All unscheduled/special events outside of documented season must be submitted and approved separately using the Town of Arlington Special Event form.
13. Any program or site expansion needs to be reviewed and receive approval from the Park and Recreation Commission.
14. All program activity must stay in approved shoreline locations (via the boat ramp or beach area or use of Boys & Girls docks for boat launches by separate arrangement) to minimize erosion.
15. Arlington Belmont Crew will pay Arlington Recreation a fee of \$10 per High School participant for each fall and spring season, as well as an annual fee of \$1,000.

15. Town will continue to pay for the rental and cleaning of portable restroom and prune trees when requested by Arlington Belmont Crew to protect its equipment or participants.
16. Access to the pond shall only be via the boat ramp or beach area (and docks shared with Boys & Girls Club under a separate arrangement). There is no activity allowed along the shore embankment.
- ✍️ 17. The Park and Recreation Commission and Arlington Belmont Crew will review this agreement on an annual basis prior to their spring season and it must be signed annually by all parties.

Arlington-Belmont Crew, Inc.

Town of Arlington- Park Recreation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doug Rosner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Connelly

\_\_\_\_\_  
Salpi Der Stepanian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## TOWN OF ARLINGTON



PARK COMMISSIONERS  
 Shirley Canniff  
 Leslie Mayer  
 Jen Rothenberg  
 Scott Walker  
 Phil Lasker  
 Sara Carrier - Associate

## Recreation Department

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST**

*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 3/14/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Jing-Huey Wei

Phone (C): 617-784-5330

Email Address: jwei@arlington.k12.ma.us

Home Address: 869 MASS Ave. Arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: 3rd Annual String Festival/Outdoor Concert

Estimated Attendance: 850

Day: Saturday

Date: June 15, 2024

Set up Time: 8:00 AM

Start Time: 10:00 PM

End Time: 11:30 PM

Break Down: 11:30 AM-12:30 PM

Site Requested: Robins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Entire Park

Activities: Outdoor Concert

Will food be on site? Yes No Please list all food: To be determined

Will you be promoting this event via social media? xYes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

**Additional Requirements/Fees:**

- Site permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
- For groups over 150 people a police detail may be required, if your group is required to get a police detail you must set this up with the department before you will receive a permit.
- If you will be having prepared food at your event you must contact the Board of Health to get the appropriate food permit.

☐ By signing below I acknowledge and accept the rules and regulations (back) responsibilities for this permit and I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Town of Arlington from and against any and all claims, demands, losses, damages, defense costs, or liability of any kind which may arise out of, or is in any manner connected with, the above-described activity.

(Signature of Responsible Party)

3/14/2024

(Date)

*Revised 4.21.2021*

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 Sara Carrier - Associate

## Recreation Department

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST**

*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Flowers & Flags Art Day

Estimated Attendance: 50

Day: Saturday

Date: 05/11/2024

Set up Time: 12:00 pm

Start Time: 1:00 pm

End Time: 3:00 pm

Break Down: 4:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Near Robbins Farmhouse Site

Activities: Arts & Crafts and kite flying

Will food be on site? Yes ☒ No ☐ Please list all food: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

**Additional Requirements/Fees:**

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
- For groups over 150 people a police detail may be required, if your group is required to get a police detail you must set this up with the department before you will receive a permit.
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Ken Hawkins  
 (Signature of Responsible Party)

03/19/2024  
 (Date)

Revised 4.21.2021



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## Recreation Department

**SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST**

*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: 4th of July & Pie

Estimated Attendance: 1000

Day: Thursday

Date: 07/04/2024

Set up Time: 4:30 pm

Start Time: 5:30 pm

End Time: 11:00 pm

Break Down: 11:30 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Upper end of the Park including the hill area

Activities: Concert, Boston Pops & Fireworks simulcast, Concessions

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: popcorn, apple pie, chips, sodas, water, etc.

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

**Additional Requirements/Fees:**

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
- For groups over 150 people a police detail may be required, if your group is required to get a police detail you must set this up with the department before you will receive a permit.
- If you will be having prepared food at your event you must contact the Board of Health to get the appropriate food permit.

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Ken Hawkins

(Signature of Responsible Party)

03/19/2024

(Date)

Revised 4.21.2021

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*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, Arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Jazz Concert

Estimated Attendance: 400

Day: Thursday

Date: 07/25/2024

Set up Time: 5:00 pm

Start Time: 6:00 pm

End Time: 8:00 pm

Break Down: 9:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Upper end of the Park including the hill area

Activities: Jazz concert & concessions

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Popcorn, pizza, chips, soda, water, etc.

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

**Additional Requirements/Fees:**

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
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03/19/2024

(Date)

Revised 4.21.2021

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*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, Arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Rockin' Robbins Concert

Estimated Attendance: 400

Day: Saturday

Date: 08/03/2024

Set up Time: 5:00 pm

Start Time: 6:00 pm

End Time: 8:00 pm

Break Down: 9:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Upper end of the Park including the hill area

Activities: Music concert & concessions

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Popcorn, pizza, chips, soda, water, etc.

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

**Additional Requirements/Fees:**

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(Signature of Responsible Party)

03/19/2024

(Date)

Revised 4.21.2021

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SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST

\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, Arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Classical Concert

Estimated Attendance: 400

Day: Saturday

Date: 08/24/2024

Set up Time: 1:00 pm

Start Time: 3:30 pm

End Time: 5:00 pm

Break Down: 6:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Upper end of the Park including the hill area

Activities: Classical concert & concessions

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Popcorn, pizza, chips, soda, water, etc.

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

## Additional Requirements/Fees:

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
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03/19/2024

(Date)

Revised 4.21.2021

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*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, Arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Movie Night

Estimated Attendance: 400

Day: Saturday

Date: 09/07/2024

Set up Time: 5:00 pm

Start Time: 6:30 pm

End Time: 9:00 pm

Break Down: 10:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Upper end of the Park including the hill area

Activities: Movie and concessions

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Popcorn, pizza, chips, soda, water, etc.

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

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Today's Date: 03/19/2024 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Friends of Robbins Farm Park (Ken Hawkins)

Phone (C): (617) 981-3234

Email Address: kenhawkins11@gmail.com

Home Address: 98 Grandview Rd, arlington, MA 02476

Purpose: Fall Cleanup

Estimated Attendance: 50

Day: Saturday

Date: 11/02/2024

Set up Time: 8:30 am

Start Time: 9:30 am

End Time: 12:30 pm

Break Down: 1:00 pm

Site Requested: Robbins Farm Park

Area at Site Requested: Throughout the park

Activities: Trash pick-up, invasive plant removal

Will food be on site? Yes ☒ No ☐ Please list all food: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
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Ken Hawkins  
 (Signature of Responsible Party)

03/19/2024  
 (Date)

Revised 4.21.2021

## Save Hills Hill

Maida Kaderian <kaderian.maida@gmail.com>

Tue 3/26/2024 3:55 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Ms. Connelley,

My husband and I strongly oppose the development of Hills Hill. We believe that preserving natural areas is essential for maintaining a livable Arlington.

With increasing development pressure, private wooded areas are rapidly disappearing. Projects like the large Mugar project threaten to erase acres of valuable woodlands. We are concerned that Hills Hill, a publicly owned wooded area, now faces a similar fate.

We urge you to reconsider the development of Hills Hill and prioritize the protection of this vital natural resource.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher DiPerna

Maida Kaderian

## Hill's Hill question

Linda Epstein <lf.epstein@verizon.net>

Tue 3/26/2024 7:49 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Mr. Connelly,

I attended the meeting on Tues. I am a member of ABAC but am not writing on behalf of the committee I fully support the mountain bike project. I had 2 concerns unrelated to the design:

1. Rodent control. Will alternatives to SGARs be used?
2. Electric assisted class 1 or 2 pedal bikes. Will they be allowed? My concern is speeds can be attained by people not familiar with mtn biking leading to loss of control and injuries to other riders.

Thanks,

Linda

Sent from my iPhone



## Hills Hill comments

Matthew De Remer <mderemer@gmail.com>

Tue 3/26/2024 8:37 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good evening Joseph,

Thanks for your hard work and that of the rest of the team on this project. I am tremendously pleased with the design as presented and very much looking forward to its completion.

The pump track and surrounding trails will be a much needed resource for kids of all ages. Using these trails will give them a connection to the outdoors and encourage stewardship of our natural resources.

I wanted to address a few concerns raised by fellow community members:

Ped only trails> Given the small land area, lack of similar facilities in town and the deeded use of this land, creating pedestrian only trails is inappropriate. Multi-use trails work effectively and ought to be acceptable for this site. If safety concerns are continued to be raised I would suggest the entire wooded area be designated bicycle only.

Unsanctioned trails> To further buttress the testimony of other speakers, if trails are established and designated at Hills Hill it is very unlikely that a significant unsanctioned trail network would form. By giving people what they want - a bicycle trail network - the town will remove the need for unsanctioned trails. Furthermore if any crop up, assuming they are inappropriate, they can be repaired by maintenance volunteers.

Maintenance> As a town resident and NEMBA member I will personally commit to work trail days. I've ridden most of the mountain bike trails in this immediate area and those maintained by NEMBA are always in a good state of repair.

Best Regards,

Matthew De Remer  
47 Decatur St  
Arlington

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**Re: Hill's Hill Mountain Bike Park**

Jeff Sugarman <jeffsugarman68@gmail.com>

Tue 3/26/2024 9:02 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Joe,

Thanks for all the work you've done to lead the Hill's Hill mountain bike park. The current design looks great!

I have a few comments/questions to pass along to the design team:

- Will the pump track be appropriate for a range of skill levels? They may have addressed this in the presentation and I just missed it.
- I appreciate that budget constraints drove the decision to leave the existing trails as-is. However, it seemed like the ambiguous "future development phase" made a lot of people uncomfortable. One of the last speakers at the meeting suggested that a set of plans for future implementation would be helpful. I'd like to second that idea.
- Has there been any discussion about introducing NEMBA to the broader community? People who don't ride are probably unaware of all the good volunteerism they provide in support of trails throughout the area. Raising that awareness might help alleviate some concerns about trail maintenance.

Thanks again! My family and I look forward to enjoying the park.

Jeff Sugarman

On Nov 20, 2023, at 8:32 AM, Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us> wrote:

Thanks Jeff!

The purpose was to get an idea of what existed so that we can take that into consideration during design. Trying to design with minimal impact. It was a condition of our funding.

Joseph Connelly, M.Ed.  
Director of Recreation  
Town of Arlington  
781-316-3889  
jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us

**Public Records Notice**

*Please be advised that pursuant to G.L. c. 4 sec. 7(26) email correspondence to and from public employees is considered a public record. Only where the content of an email falls within one of the stated exemptions within the law may the Town withhold documents or information.*

## Bike Trails in Hills Hill

Ellen Kravitz <EKrav@aol.com>

Tue 3/26/2024 1:10 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Clarissa Rowe <clarissa.rowe@comcast.net>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Joe,

I wanted to send comments for Tuesday's zoom meeting on Hills Hill. (I will try to attend, but am not certain I can.)

I hope that requests for compromise are not misunderstood as yet more NIMBYism. I live on King St., across Summer St. from Hills Hill. Most of the folks I speak with support a compromise: bike trails at Hills Hill with the pump track somewhere just outside the park.

I agree that bike trails at Hills Hill would be a good addition to Arlington's recreation options. (And selfishly, I hope bikers invested in the area will volunteer to help keep it clean, as most of the abutters who once did so have either given up or moved away.) My one concern is the location of the pump track. As more and more properties/spaces in Arlington are cleared for mansions, natural space is rapidly disappearing. Hills Hill is one of the few spaces left for certain plants and wildlife, and a pump track, no matter how carefully constructed, will be far more invasive/disruptive than bike trails alone.

Over the years, I've heard owls and seen coyotes, raccoons, woodchucks, rabbits, and an opossum in Hills Hill. I know that even minor clearing (of underbrush, grasses, weeds, bushes, small trees, etc.) can make an area less hospitable for wildlife, forcing animals with nowhere left to go to venture across busy streets into our yards, under our porches, etc. A compromise between the need for bike trails and the need to preserve a small area for plants and animals would be to place the most invasive piece of the project, the pump track, just outside the woods.

The soccer fields (between Hills Hill and the hockey rink) are used for organized sports only 2 or 3 months per year, usually by small children engaged in multiple soccer games played horizontally on the field. The rest of the year, the fields are unused except by dog walkers or folks playing catch. Might the already cleared edge of the field that's immediately adjacent to Hills Hill be a place for a pump track? That would have minimal impact on plants and wildlife in the woods.

I hope there will be a genuine compromise on this issue, giving the bikers the trails they desire while placing the pump track in an area that has less impact on wildlife and vegetation.

As always, thank you for listening,

Ellen Kravitz  
10 King Street

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## Hill's Hill design meeting on 3/26/24

Diane Krause <samburu@comcast.net>

Mon 4/1/2024 10:52 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Christine Bongiorno <CBongiorno@town.arlington.ma.us>; clarissa.rowe@comcast.net <clarissa.rowe@comcast.net>; Kin Lau <klau@town.arlington.ma.us>; blmayer@msn.com <blmayer@msn.com>; abobzosa@gmail.com <abobzosa@gmail.com>; srdoctrow@gmail.com <srdoctrow@gmail.com>; robinsj@rcn.com <robinsj@rcn.com>; ja-preston@comcast.net <ja-preston@comcast.net>; Brian McBride <brianmcb@outlook.com>; dswanson922@gmail.com <dswanson922@gmail.com>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Joe Connelly and Parks & Rec Commissioners:

Thank you Joe for the 3/26 presentation of the design for the pump track in the woods near Summer St., where you clearly and thoughtfully laid out your reasoning for the location. However, you neglected to present your plan on how you will protect Hill's Hill's habitat outside of the pump track area, which is a concern to many Arlington residents and was the reason behind CPAC's requirements for funding.

The tree survey proved there's an abundance and variety of native trees in the interior of the park. I've spent hours in Hills Hill over the past few years working with friends to remove black swallow wort plants. It's extremely satisfying to help protect this tiny park.

Hill's Hill is for everyone, not just young mountain bikers. And it needs to be preserved and protected for everyone to enjoy, however they choose to be in nature.

I hope to hear your plans for:

**Safety** It's true bikers are allowed on trails in Arlington parks along with walkers, but in no other park will there be such a concentration of bikers in such a small area. We don't have the luxury here of a large park where bikers can be separate from walkers and for there to be trails long enough for mountain biking adults to enjoy.

The most popular trail for walking is the central path through the meadow from Washington St. to the ball fields. People walking here will be intersecting with bikers moving between the pump track area and the bike path.

Solutions? Close the central trail to bikers?

**Habitat Preservation** In the feasibility study conducted by Powderhorn they warned of potential issues for the pump track & trails:

Volatile weather patterns, i.e., heavy rain and related erosion

Potential high volume leading to heavy wear

We're already seeing erosion from riders and heavy rains. We're already seeing high volumes of unauthorized trails, with more being built over the past few months.

What is the plan for a large group of riders at the pump track location? How do you keep them from overrunning the area?

How will erosion and heavy use and unauthorized trails be addressed? Will volunteers really be in charge of maintenance? (This seems to be discouraged in other Arlington parks.) Will there be periodic reviews of conditions in the park?

Joe, in the meeting you stated that there's no way to stop people from making illegal trails. That is probably true of one or two trails in a park, but at Hill's Hill we have multiple unauthorized trails with jumps being made by bikers. The kids and/or adults who are doing this are giving the impression that they can do anything they want at Hill's Hill. I hope that's not true.

What enforcement mechanisms will you put in place? Will you block the unauthorized trails? Shut down access to the pump track as one of your contractors suggested? (I hope that isn't necessary.) The large number of Arlington residents who care about the habitat really need to hear your plans on these issues.

If the PRC answer is that there's nothing we can do to stop the unauthorized trails, then I can't support your plan. I hope a solution can be found—there's been progress and compromise. The pump track design looks amazing. Let's not sacrifice the rest of Hill's Hill by not having a plan in place for the entire habitat that respects the needs of walkers and neighbors as well as young mountain bike riders.

Thank you,

Diane Krause  
High Haith Rd.

The soccer field is part of the Hill's Hill property, so more than 50% is already being used for active recreation

# Informational Brief: Early Childhood Education

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## Executive Summary

While MAAEYC welcomes the engagement in updating public playgrounds to meet high standards, and would like to support the Parks & Rec Commission in those goals, we strongly urge the town to actively seek and listen to feedback from the town's parent & early childhood education community in how to best achieve those goals.

We recognize that Arlington has the opportunity to be a leader in providing high quality & safe spaces for children to play in your town, without excluding children or hurting parents and early childhood education programs providing essential services to Arlington families. The permitting fee currently proposed by the Arlington Parks & Rec Commission would feasibly have a large detrimental effect on children's ability to access high quality early childhood education opportunities in Arlington, due to several factors described in this brief.

We welcome and encourage you to contact us with any questions from the Commission or town representatives.

## MAAEYC: Who We Are

We are the MA state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), or, MAAEYC. Our members include hundreds of parents, grandparents, and early childhood education professionals across the state. Our mission is simple; to collaborate with families, educators and agencies to support high quality early education and care through professional development and advocacy so that each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high-quality early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce.

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*"Each and every child, beginning at birth, has the opportunity to benefit from high-quality early childhood education, delivered by an effective, diverse, well-prepared, and well-compensated workforce."*

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In response to feedback and strong concern from MAAEYC members regarding the public park permit fee proposed by the town of Arlington Park & Rec Commission, we submit this brief to you today to provide information regarding the common program structure of early childhood education programs within the mixed delivery system in Massachusetts, so that you may take this into consideration when debating policy decisions that strongly affect these programs. As currently outlined, this policy will likely have a negative effect on children's access to play spaces in Arlington. We strongly urge the

town of Arlington to actively solicit feedback from the early childhood education and parent community in Arlington *before* moving forward with this policy. Play is a fundamental right of each and every child.

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# The Right to Play

**Young children learn through play; it allows them to engage directly with the world using all senses, to test new ideas, and practice their developing physical, intellectual, language, & social/emotional skills in a safe environment.**

Public playgrounds are an essential ingredient in creating access to play spaces for children. The necessity of playful learning is undeniable, and clearly reflected in the body of research supporting the early childhood education profession & practice. It is so fundamental that it has been recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as a right of every child. Unfortunately, we also know that across our cities and towns, children do not get equal access to play opportunities.

“...many Western cities are premised on an historical disregard for children in urban planning. Urban development trends in Europe and the US historically produced unsustainable, adult-centered environments that adversely affected children's healthy development and wellbeing (Christensen & O'Brien, 2003; Hart, 1979; Karsten, 2002; Lynch, 1977; Tonucci, 1997; Valentine, 1997; Van den Van den Berg, 2013; Ward, 1978). Such adverse environments occurred through children's institutionalization, enclosure and control (De Visscher & Bouverne-de Bie, 2008; Zeiher, 2001), **and through poor free outdoor play** and contact with nature (Louv, 2005).” Instituting a permitting fee for access to public playgrounds will severely restrict community based ECE programs ability to utilize them, and therefore severely limit children’s access to play spaces needed for their high quality education.

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*“ Instituting a permitting fee for access to public playgrounds will severely restrict community based ECE programs ability to utilize them, and therefore severely limit children’s access to play spaces needed for their high quality education.”*

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Some programs may be able to supplement the lack of access to public parks in order to retain their licenses and remain in operation either by taking walks outdoors, or through time spent at program owned playgrounds. Other programs unable to do so may need to pass on the cost of the permit fee directly to parents, who may or may not be able to keep their children enrolled.

The excluded children who will be most affected by this policy are likely the ones who attend licensed programs in residential apartments or houses (FCC) that do not have their own dedicated outdoor space. FCC are largely unable to pass on this type of fee to enrolled families through tuition increases; the fee would then be directly taken from their own income (an average of \$13.20/hour according to a

new Boston Opportunity Agenda report), or it may compromise their ability to stay in business as a licensed ECE program.

Access to care has an effect on which families can afford to live and work in your town, and access to high quality ECE has an effect on how children do during their k-12 education. Supporting accessible, high quality, & licensed early childhood education programming in your town is essential both for parents' ability to work and children's safety & optimal learning.

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## The Mixed Delivery System:



**Highlight 1: Multiple Settings**

Early childhood education (ECE) is delivered in a variety of program formats. These typically have included both group care in non-residential spaces colloquially known as “centers” and mixed-age group care in residential buildings, referred to in MA as family child care (FCC). Collectively they are known as community-based programs.

Some towns also offer preschool options for 3- and 4-year-olds through the public school system, with many children attending supplemental programming known as “Out of School Time” care either within community-based programs or through the public school.

Parent and family choice is an important component of effective, high quality ECE. In MA this is limited by the extremely high cost of care, especially for infants and toddlers, and limited availability of ECE programs.

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## Further Reading

- [Department of Early Education and Care](#)
  - [EC101](#)
  - [Neighborhood Villages - High Quality Early Childhood Education: Opening the Books on Its True Costs](#)
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The Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) is a part of the MA State Government, with a mission to support the healthy growth and development of all children by providing high quality programs and resources for families and communities. Along with several other tasks, the department is charged with licensing community-based ECE programs and certifying the expertise and experience of teachers working in the programs through their teacher certification program.



## **Highlight 2: Licensed**

In order to remain in good standing and retain their licenses, community-based programs must follow the regulations issued by the department, specifying health & safety policies & procedures, along with several other strictures determined to be necessary for providing high quality ECE including outdoor time.



### Highlight 3: Funding Model

Community-based early childhood education programs typically operate on tight margins, with a limited ability to save. Programs funded 100% through tuition may operate entirely based on tuition paid directly by family (“private”), entirely based on subsidized tuition through child care financial assistance (“public”), or a combination. Some programs may also fund a small part of their program expenses through grants, donations, or employer-sponsored subsidy.

Already operating off of constrained budgets, programs were incredibly hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic both due to the interruption of services and the additional expenses necessary to provide safe environments for children in the midst of a pandemic. Since then, MA has begun offering Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) operational grants, which have been instrumental in supporting ECE programs across the state in being able to stay open through this incredibly difficult time. Even so, there remains a large funding gap inherent in the typical funding model;

*“Most notably, the cost of providing high-quality care far exceeds what families are currently paying in the market and what most providers are currently able to spend on operating their programs. The difference between the market price of care and both the actual and high-quality costs of care can be attributed to the fact that providers have finite resources and are unable to independently increase revenues from families or government in order to increase quality.” -Neighborhood Villages (report linked in further reading)*

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## Contact

We welcome you to contact MAAEYC with further questions.



[president@maeeyc.org](mailto:president@maeeyc.org)

### **MAAEYC Contact:**

*Patty Sinclair,*

*MAAEYC Governing Board  
President*

*Report prepared by: Amanda Storth,  
MAAEYC Governing Board Past  
President*



[www.maeeyc.org](http://www.maeeyc.org)